

VZCZCXYZ0008
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHRH #1237 2251330
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 121330Z AUG 08
FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8962
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
INFO RUEAHLA/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY 0242
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMUSCENTAF SHAW AFB SC PRIORITY
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L RIYADH 001237

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

ISN/RA FOR DAS MHAYWARD AND ASTUKALIN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/12/2028
TAGS: [ENERG](#) [IAEA](#) [KNNP](#) [SA](#)
SUBJECT: SAUDI COUNCIL OF MINISTERS APPROVES AGREEMENT WITH
IAEA ON NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS

REF: JEDDAH 00268

11. (C) On August 11, 2008, The Saudi Council of Ministers approved the Government of Saudi Arabia's (SAG) agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to enforce the Nuclear Safeguards Agreement under the frame work of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treat (NPT), as reported in local media. As discussed during the June 23 meeting between Ambassador Fraker and Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal in Jeddah, the SAG sought the Council's approval to bring into force the original Nuclear Safeguards Agreement Saudi Arabia signed in 2005. The approval was required for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Secretary Rice and Sa'ud al-Faysal signed on May 16, 2008 to enter into force. This Council action also allows SAG to accept the May 2008 invitation of the Steering Group of the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) to join that organization.

12. (C) Post is planning meetings with officials at the King Abulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) in the next few days to determine when the SAG will inform the IAEA officially about this decision. This marks the latest milestone in the SAG's adherence to international norms on nuclear energy matters that will open the path to greater U.S.-Saudi nuclear cooperation. The speed with which the SAG took steps to approve their original Safeguards Agreement demonstrates the seriousness of the Saudi commitment to cooperation with USG on peaceful nuclear energy. It also serves as an effective counter argument to the criticism SAG received when it sought a Small Quantities Protocol with the IAEA in 2005, which some saw as a loophole for pursuing a secret nuclear research program. SAG will need to revise this Protocol as an additional step to full implementation of the Safeguards Agreement.
GFOELLER